

MAINE FARMER

AGRICULTURE MECHANIC ARTS GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

VOL. XV.

AUGUSTA, THURSDAY MORNING, MARCH 4, 1847.

NO. 9.



Our Home, our Country, and our Brother Man.

HINTS UPON HOGS.

A long time ago, the wise man of the East inculcated the doctrine that there was a time and a season for every thing; and we suppose that it was in accordance with this principle that the swine fever, or rather the Berkshire fever, had its rise, progress and decline. Excitements in the community, like excitements in the corporeal system, are generally succeeded by a corresponding degree of depression; and during this depressed state, the judgment seems to suffer so much, that it pronounces the thing which it once thought invaluable, now worthless. The Berkshire mania has gone through all these stages, and is now below zero. Common sense, however, declines a different view of things. That the Berkshire breed of swine were extolled too high, is true; but they ought not to be wholly discarded as they seem to be now. They were superior in form, hearty and thrifty. The objection to them, at present, is, their color, which is black—their size, which is pronounced to be too small, and the texture of their flesh, which is said to have too much lean. In regard to the first—we would say, that it would not be difficult to change the color by crossing, and as to the second. In regard to the third—for a hog to be used as fresh meat, or for Bacon, they have not too much lean. If it is desired to have what is called clear pork, for barrelled, perhaps another variety of swine would be preferable in some respects.

A cross of the Berkshire and the Bedford hog, or what is sometimes called the Woburn, makes a very fine animal. This variety is exhibited in the cut which we insert for your inspection. It gives length of side, and rather more depth of chest, but not quite so much breadth of back and quarters as the full blood Berkshires. Of course there will be less size of muscle, and when the swine is fattened completely there is more fat, or clear pork in proportion to the lean part. The Mackey breed were an excellent breed for those who prefer clear fat. Their length of side and depth of carcass were well calculated to produce a larger proportion of this than some other breeds that presented large muscular quarters.

One reason for the decline of the pig interest, is the low price which the slaughtered hog and pork has brought in our markets for a year or two past. There is a change coming over this branch of business, as well as over many other branches connected with the farm, which will have a tendency to bring up the price of pork in the market. The change in the British tariff, whereby American produce, and American beef and pork is admitted at a very moderate duty, cannot fail to increase the demand for corn and for pork. In such a case, where, not only the material which makes the pork is in great demand, but also the pork itself, the price must increase. He, therefore, who has a good breed of hogs, need not fear of meeting with a loss; and he who has not a good breed, need not hesitate to obtain an improved one, for fear of losing his time, money and trouble.

The hog is an animal that requires more care and attention to keep pure in breed, than any other. There are two reasons for this. First, their being so very prolific, and second, their not being allowed to live so long as other animals. Where there are so many produced at a birth, there are always shades of difference, which, by being mixed in without much care with others, in a few generations makes essential changes. Farmers, generally, do not like to keep a hog more than a year and a half or two years, before they slaughter him. Not so with the horse or cow family. If the best breeders among swine were kept solely for that purpose, until the powers of nature became exhausted, we should not so often hear farmers say, "my breed of swine has run out." We are aware that it seems to be good economy to turn a swine into cash as soon as he comes to maturity; but it may, nevertheless, be seriously questioned, whether the loss by deterioration of breed does not more than counterbalance the seeming saving that is made by slaughtering early.

PRESERVING BACON. The editor of the Farmers' Cabinet says he follows the following mode of preserving his bacon, which he finds superior to all other plans.

Envelope the ham completely in two or three newspapers and put it in a muslin bag. Let there be a string put through the hock, say six or eight inches long, by which it may be hung up; draw the mouth of the bag tight and tie it round the string. It is better to tie the ham, when suspended in the closet or cellar, upon its own string, rather than upon that of the bag in which it is enclosed. The bag will be injured if the ham bears upon the bottom of it.

WHEAT. Wheat is said to be far less liable to injury by the grain worm when sowed late, but, to offset this advantage, is more exposed to rust. Late sowing extends the period of maturation into what is usually denominated by farmers, "dog day weather," which is likely to engender rust.

THE CITRUS PUMPER. The seed of this valuable vegetable was sent to this country by Com. Porter, from Constantinople. It is an excellent production, being as fine grained as the best winter squash. It attains a large size on good soil.

See that your enclosures are all up and in good repair.

HISTORY OF THE HESSIAN FLY.

We have been favored, by the author, with a very interesting little work bearing the above title. It is by Asa Fitch, M. D., of Salem, New York. Dr. Fitch has already laid the agricultural community under obligations to him, by the publication of an essay on the wheat fly, (what we in Maine call the grain worm and weevil.)

This work on the Hessian fly is the best essay on this little but powerful scourge that has yet appeared. He has gone into the history of it thoroughly, divested it of much that was uncertain and ambiguous, and made it clear and plain to every one. He demonstrates that it was brought hither by the Hessian army, in the straw taken on board of the vessels in which they (the Hessians) embarked in Europe. He then gives what he calls its "civil history," or a condensed statement of the views which different writers have maintained in regard to it. Then follows a description of its characters, transformations and habits. He proves that there are two generations of them in a year.

He also gives an account of its "Parasites" or insects that prey upon it, and thus check, in some measure, its increase; and concludes by a consideration of the remedies proposed. We have never been much troubled with the Hessian fly in Maine. We suppose it is because so little winter wheat is raised among us. We are, however, deeply interested in any knowledge which may tend to enlighten mankind in regard to the ravages of this insect, and which will assist the wheat grower in repelling its ravages. Whatever diminishes the support of life, or, in other words, bread, interests every man directly; and whatever knowledge can be spread abroad by which farmers are enabled to produce an increase of sustenance, interests all directly; and he who elicits and sends forth this knowledge, is a public benefactor.

THE BERKSHIRES.

Much has been said and written recently by our agricultural friends, editors and newspaper correspondents, in laudation of the Berkshire breed of hogs; but the tables now appear to have been turned, and those who formerly praised and patronized them, are apparently their bitterest foes. *Sic transit gloria mundi.* In the report of the committee on swine in the Transactions of the Essex Agricultural Society, in an article relating to the breeds and management of swine, we find the following, by A. W. Dodge, Esq., a gentleman who accords particular attention to this subject, and of course has possessed himself of the requisite facilities for forming a correct opinion and judgment as to the merits of each. "With regard to breeds," says Mr. Dodge, "the Berkshire, which but a few years since put forth the loftiest pretensions to public favor, is now generally condemned by those who have kept and slaughtered them. In England, where swine meat is used more as other meat is, than with us, and where it is consequently desirable to have a considerable portion of it lean, the Berkshires are held in high repute. A yankee, however, looks first and foremost to a hog as a relish, and for fat. But for furnishing this the Berkshire breed is the very worst that exists. The fat pork of an entire Berkshire hog that weighs 350 lbs., or 400 lbs., is about two inches in thickness, and about half an inch of that rind. It is very soft, and does not cool like good pork. The legs and shoulders are very weighty, as are also the spare-ribs and loins."

(1.) We have never been favorably disposed towards the Berkshire, of the pure blood, but we do not believe that the rind of any hog, no matter what the breed, ever reached this thickness. Half an inch! We would as soon credit the stories of the Baron Munchausen himself.

CROSS FERTILIZATION.

The mixing of vegetables is, with some persons, a matter involved in much mystery. It is not our intention to deny that mixtures of different varieties, and even of adverse species, do not some times take place; but we are confidently assured that such cross fertilization is graduated by an established and irrevocable natural law. Thus we may have an intermixture of melons, cabbages, turnips, and, indeed, a number of other vegetables, although we never find corn to mix with millet, or wheat with peas. Beets, carrots, parsnips and cucumbers may be mixed with melons and squashes, simply by cross fertilization; as the pistils of one variety will receive the pollen of the other. This is called hybridizing. The distinguished T. A. Knight, for some years President of the London Horticultural Society—a man celebrated for his success in producing new varieties of fruit, was accustomed to select flowers from two varieties which he regarded as most likely to intermix, and then remove the stamens from the blossoms which he intended to impregnate with the fertilizing dust from the other. "This was done as soon as the flower was developed, and before the pollen was formed. The flowers were then protected by this muslin dust carefully over till the stigma became fully dilated, and the pollen might be shaken from the stamens of other blossoms, when the covering was removed, and the pollen from flowers of impregnating variety, well scattered over the pistils, and the covering resumed till the fruit commenced swelling. The seeds formed by flowers thus impregnated, produced trees which bore fruit showing the results of the intermixture, and which in many instances of improved quality."

We have been informed that the Shakers of Niskayuna have a very choice kind of grapes, produced by cross-breeding.

If dried peas, either for soup or eating whole, are soaked until they begin to vegetate (about two days,) they will taste as well as green peas.



A Cross of the Berkshire and Bedford.

REMEDY FOR THE RHEUMATISM. We presume we shall not be regarded as trespassing on the province or "prerogative" of our friend the "Doctor," by inserting the following: "Mr. Cose," says an exchange, "in his Travels in Poland, vol. v., says that the peasants of Norway use the following remedy in rheumatic cases, and find it effectual. They prepare a decoction of oak leaves in beer, and apply a cloth dipped in it to the part affected. The remedy is unquestionably harmless, and, for ought we know, effectual."

The *INSECT FLY* lays its eggs in Autumn, but the insect is not developed till the following Spring, when it is animated by the warmth of the soil, and usually comes forth to commence its depredations contemporaneously with the plant on which it is to feed. Stirring the soil for a fortnight or so previously to sowing, and affording a good dressing of sulphur, house ashes and soot, equal parts, as soon as the plants appear, is often an effectual remedy. Indeed, we have never known it to fail.

KENNEBEC AG. SOCIETY.

The committee on teams of oxen and steers ask leave to report: That there were present teams of oxen from the towns of Augusta, Vassalboro', Sidney and Waterville, which came within the rule of the society for premiums. The committee found no difficulty in agreeing, that the team from Vassalboro' was the best, and award to it the first premium; and they award to the team from Sidney the second premium.

There was present only one team of three year old steers, which was from Vassalboro', and to that the committee award the society's premium. The teams generally were very good, and fully sustained the reputation of this county for large and handsome oxen. Few teams have been exhibited at any of our shows superior to the one to which the first premium was awarded. The committee would recommend a gratuity to the other two teams from Augusta and Waterville.

JOHN OTIS, Chairman.

AGRICULTURAL MEETING.

The attention of our agricultural readers and others interested in the advancement of agriculture in the County, is directed to the following report of the proceedings of the Ossipee Agricultural Society, which held its first annual meeting at Alfred on Wednesday last. We were present at the meeting, and were much gratified with the warm interest which those in attendance manifested in carrying forward the purposes of the association. It was unanimously agreed that the Society should commence its operations immediately, and a plan of action was discussed, which, we think, will do much towards promoting the agricultural interests of the County. It will be perceived from the proceedings, that a large committee, consisting of the Vice Presidents of the Society, was raised to solicit new members, from among the citizens of the County. We earnestly hope that the committee will perform their duties with alacrity and energy, and be successful in enlisting a large portion of the farmers of the County as members. The Society is now fully organized and ready to commence operations. It may be of great service in promoting the science of agriculture among us, and we trust that those who ought, above all others, to give it their support, will not be backward in becoming members. Now is the time to give the Society a good start.

At the Annual Meeting of the Ossipee Agricultural Society, held at Alfred, on the 10th inst., the following officers were elected:—Hon. Rufus McIntire, President. Vice Presidents: Berwick, Elijah Hayes, Jr.; Saco, Thomas Dyer, 3d; Acton, Luther Good; Waterbury, Isaac Deering; Sanford, John T. Paine; Cornish, John Parsons; Parsons, Cyrus K. Moore; Alfred, Archibald Smith; Newfield, Nathan M. Lowe; Biddeford, Thomas Day; Lebanon, Thomas M. Wentworth; South Berwick, W. A. Hayes; York, Charles Moody; Limerick, Wm. Swayse; Limington, Arthur McArthur; Lyman, Joseph Murphy; Kennebunk, B. Palmer; Kennebunk Port, John G. Perkins; Buxton, Joseph Hobson; Hollis, John M. Goodwin; Elliot, James W. Shapleigh; Kittery, Goven Wilson; Shapleigh, M. Goodwin, Jr.; Wells, William Good; North Berwick, Col. H. Fall; Gilman, H. Bennet. Corresponding Secretary: L. O. Cowan. Recording Secretary: S. L. Goodale. Treasurer and Collector: John Jameson. Agent: Rufus Nichols; William A. Hayes, and Rufus McIntire, Trustees. S. L. Goodale, Librarian.

An assessment of one dollar on each member was voted for the coming year. It was voted that the President make application to the Legislature, to have the name of the Society changed to the "York County Agricultural Society."

The Vice Presidents were requested to act, each in his own town, to solicit new applications for membership, and to obtain the necessary dues from members, in aid of the Collector.

It was resolved that a Fair and Cattle Show be held the ensuing Autumn, at such time and place, and under such regulations as the Trustees should decide; and that they engage some person to deliver an address at the Fair. Adjourned to 2d June. [Saco Union.]

their object the encouragement of the agricultural and mechanical industry of our State and country. We should all, my friends, unite with increased energy and perseverance in an undertaking so noble and inseparable from the true and substantial interests of the country. And I will repeat that it is a proud spectacle to witness an assemblage, not only of the representatives of the intelligent, the industrious and the fair of our population, but of the specimens which represent the agricultural and mechanical wealth of that population. And although it is heart-cheering indeed, to behold what has here been spread out before our unwearied eyes, yet we have great reason to hope still greater and more glorious results will follow in the onward progress of your infant, but noble society. The fertility of your soil is well established, as appears from the garnered products of your fields here presented—and all you want, and all you need, is willing minds and ready hands to make this fertile country famous for its productions throughout New England. She already stands on the foreground, among her sister counties, in agricultural and mechanical productions. The soil must be cultivated, must be cultivated rightly and advantageously, and believe me when I say, the two great instruments of human industry, the *hoe* and the *plough*, need wisdom as well as momentum to direct them. There is no science which so eminently deserves to enter into the plan of a good education as that of the cultivation of the soil. By studying such a noble science systematically, you will learn to feel your dependence on Him who is the author of "every good and perfect gift."

Mr. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW CITIZENS: It is a cheering occasion which has called us together. It is to celebrate the festival of the Harvest Home. When summer suns have passed away, and autumn leaves are falling; when nature's bounties lie in profusion before our eyes, it is right and proper to assemble and invoke the blessings of heaven on the ingatherings of the year. And what phenomenon does this festival present to our gaze? Horses, cattle, sheep, manufacturers, household goods, and the rich products of garden, field and tree. It is a proud and pleasing spectacle indeed, to witness the specimens of the agricultural and mechanical wealth of this section of the State. Only look back to 1771, and what do we see? A few towns only in this county, beginning their political existence. I see gray hairs before me, perhaps older than that epoch—yes, almost as old as the presence of the hoe and the plough on your soil. Fellow citizens, a miracle has been wrought, and by whom? By the farmers and mechanics of this county—the energy, hope, nerve and muscle of every happy clime. Look on the change that three-fourths of a century has produced in the aspect of your beautiful country! What have seventy-five years wrought?

A change, a wonderful change indeed! From a howling wilderness, where once stood the wigwam, and where once stalked the red man, through the darkness of ages, have arisen fruitful fields, cities, hamlets, and commercial towns, profusely supplied with all that necessity could demand or luxury invent. Seventy-five years ago, at Indian Cushnoc, on yonder bank, you could have seen but four block houses and Fort Western, like an oasis in the desert, to protect the pioneers from the depredations of an unrelenting and savage foe. But what, Fellow Citizens, can we now see? A State House, a spacious and massive structure—an Arsenal, with its several thousand stands of arms—an Insane Hospital, an honor to the State and humanity—a High School architecture, with its pediment front and doric columns—a Printing Press, to do the work of human hand and hands—a Factory, with its one hundred and four windows in front, and several magnificent Churches that bathe their turrets in the lightning's home. And what else do we see? The everlasting waters of a magnificent river arrested in their course, which for ages had rolled its mighty current through a dark and lonely wilderness to the ocean, compelled to lend its gigantic strength to aid the industrial arts and supply, in all future time, the wants of teeming millions! Other towns in your county besides Cushnoc can boast, too, of great wealth, happiness, and civilization. One of a respectable College, having a president, three professors and two tutors. At the junction of yonder noble river with the Collobessee, stands one of the most flourishing towns in the State, full of industry and enterprise. And above stands a beautiful village, whose scenery is of uncommon excellence. And the eyes of the imagination see gathering in the distance, one continuous village, from the herculean Dam to the mouth of the Collobessee. Almost begin to hear, like music rolling from afar, the sound of its voices—the din of its industry, and even the ringing of its rail-road bell! Fellow citizens, you are a highly favored people; you live in a beautiful and beautiful section of New England. Your Speaker is proud to own that he first saw the light, and passed his boyhood's days in that pleasant, rural, and romantic State, "whose star never sets," yet from the first bright ray of Aurora, to the last lingering one of evening, his heart cannot but be thankful that the State of Maine, among her beautiful streams, verdant hills and pleasant valleys, is the home of his adoption. I have recently cast my eyes over the face of this county, its soil of a superior quality producing its abundance, its great abundance of grasses, grains, vegetables and fruits. I have witnessed the union of its hydraulic power with its navigable waters, and I cannot but place it among the most highly favored sections of our common country. You live in a section of the State, in a high degree capable of improvement, and I am rejoiced, exceedingly rejoiced, to believe that a salutary and regenerating spirit has breathed its influence into the minds of its population, which is giving efficiency and activity to the modes adopted for its melioration. That such influences, with the examples of the friends of agriculture, such as I now see before me, and all peaceful and useful arts, will increase, bringing forth fruits more and more abundantly, should be our morning and evening desires. But what need I speak the praises of this rich, this growing and this beautiful country? It can speak nobly for itself. The returns which it gives your own industry bear conspicuous evidences of its luxury and profusion. And well it may become you, gentlemen farmers and mechanics, to assemble here to view, with honest exultation, the products of your farms and your workshops, and award to them where merit is due. Among the important events of the day, there are none in which we should take more pleasure in witnessing, than the transactions of those associated bodies of our citizens, which have for

of the glorious harvest, we may rest in undoubting assurance that our children will reap its full fruition.

Agriculture, from the earliest era, wherever carried on, has been the foundation of all trade and the source of almost all riches. It must be enlightened and cultivated with the utmost integrity, if we wish to protect the citadels of our liberty and the altars of our religion; for nothing can prosper without its munificent streams. The festival to celebrate its bounties is an institution of simplicity and grandeur, and must, in the end, fix the attention of the whole country. It is destined in its good aims to enrich and enlighten the sons of toil. Its peaceful influence must spread, and widely spread, wherever industry and science embrace each other, and like popular education, all the darkened eyes of the people will, at no distant day, behold its perennial blessings. It is difficult, extremely difficult, to engage men in attempts at improvement, from the fact that many have very inadequate notions of what is possible to be accomplished. Men, sometimes, are like children, who can see and know nothing which is not directly before their eyes. They will not believe you show them a chain, unless you present to their eyes every link, both hooks and the swivel. If they cannot see distinctly the good effects of agricultural societies, they will denounce them as worthless. But, Mr. President, this is no way for us to act in this onward march of agricultural improvement. It is our duty to dispense from before our eyes this film of prejudice and chimeras, and thereby become enabled in knowing, in a great measure, the laws of nature—of forecasting and preparing for events—of producing results—of renouncing whatever is noxious, and appropriating whatever is beneficial to our occupation and art. Most of you cultivate land, and most of you know how to prepare the original soil; but to prepare the original soil for a crop is one thing, and to prepare the manure for it is another, especially the mineral manures. To talk to you about what you already know would be but little benefit. I shall, therefore, confine my remarks to several things, perhaps some of you may not well understand. I shall take no airy flight, but principally dwell on the surface of the earth, the soil. The improvement of the soil has been, and is now, a subject of deep consideration and interest to every farmer, and has elicited from men of great genius and science, years of indefatigable labor—each in his course arriving at something new for the alleviation of our toil, or to increase more abundantly the munificent productions of our farms. Wherever the earth is without vegetable growth it is barren, and the wisdom displayed in keeping up its fertility is clearly set forth in the decomposition of her own productions. We must not forget how nature herself acts in her own laboratory. She enriches our fence-corners and woodlands, by keeping them covered, while we impoverish the field. Shall we overlook her operations? To enrich our lands, they should never be left without a covering to protect them from the sun of summer, and as far as our abilities extend, from the severe frosts of winter.

(NOT CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.)

ORIGIN OF THE APPLE TREE.

The Common Apple Tree, or some allied species grows spontaneously in almost every part of the northern hemisphere, except in the torrid and frigid zones, and some of the islands in the ocean. This tree, by itself, or conjointly with other species or races, is the parent of innumerable varieties and sub-varieties, generally known by the name of "cultivated apples." Many of them are not only derived from the wild apple, or *malus*, of Europe, but from the crabs of Siberia and Astrachan. The fruit of trees raised from seeds of the same apple, differs both from that of the parent tree, and from each other; from which circumstance, and the intermixture of different species or varieties by hybridization, it is utterly impossible to trace the multitude of cultivated sorts to forms from which they have been obtained.

In Britain, Ireland, and North America, the common apple tree occurs wild, in hedges, and on the margins of woods. It is cultivated for its fruit, both in the temperate and transition zones of both hemispheres, even in the southern parts of India, on the Himalayas, and in China and Japan. And it is a curious fact, that no plant is ever seen in Guiana, without either leaf, flower, or fruit except the common apple tree, which never changes its original nature, but blossoms and bears leaves and fruits at about the same time of the year, as with us!

That the apple-tree is a native of the eastern part of the world, we have the authority of the earliest writers in "Holy Writ," as well as of the naturalists of ancient Greece and Rome. It is mentioned by Homer. The prophet Joel, and also by Pliny. The poet, Horace, Flaccus, Columella, Pliny, and others; a Historical Notice of which may also be found with those of the Quince, the Pomegranate, and the Olive, in the "Trees of America."

The making of cider, was introduced into Britain by the Normans, who, it is said, obtained the art from Spain, where it is no longer practised. This liquor is supposed to have been first known, however, in Africa, from its being mentioned by the two African fathers, Tertullian and Augustin, and was introduced by the Carthaginians into Sicily, a province unfriendly to the vine.

[Exchange paper.]

A newly enlisted recruit claimed to be discharged yesterday, from the Recorder on the ground of a nervous affection with which he was afflicted, and, particularly, on the report of fire-arms, rendered him unable to hold anything in his hands.

"Why," said the Recorder, "you appear strong and vigorous enough."

"It's true that I appear so," said the recruit, "but, I tell you, I have not got the nervous of war." [N. O. Delta.]

[illegible]

